

## ANNEX G

### EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

#### A. PURPOSE

Experience gained from past disasters indicates that most communities do not have the resources needed to provide adequate health services during emergencies and disasters. Planning for meeting human health needs helps to insure that the services likely to be needed will be available to those individuals and communities during emergencies and disasters. Primary responsibility for Emergency Health Services lies with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. This annex delineates the assistance that is available from the Department of Health and Human Resources during emergencies or disasters for medical and/or health services.

#### B. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources provides or coordinates the provision of services in the following emergency health areas:
  - a. Determining that public water supplies are potable and, if not, arranging safe alternative supplies.
  - b. Arranging for sanitary disposal of human wastes if municipal or district sewage and wastewater treatment facilities become inoperable, in coordination with the Division of Environmental Protection (DEP).
  - c. Determining that garbage and waste storage and disposal present no public health hazard and arranging safe alternatives when required, in coordination with the DEP.
  - d. Advising users of private water supplies and sewage disposal systems that their use is safe or arranging for safe alternatives, in coordination with the DEP.
  - e. Inspecting shelters and feeding facilities to insure their sanitary condition. This also applies to hotels, resorts and restaurants in the disaster area.
  - f. Advising and assisting affected communities concerning mass immunization programs, home clean-up procedures, and general medical advice to prevent or control disease outbreaks.
  - g. Coordinating services through the WVOES to prevent and control disease such as, but not limited to, debris removal, insect and rodent control and medical and analytical laboratory services.

- h. Regulating burial and re-burial activities so that no hazard to the public is created.
- i. Maintaining adequate records of the numbers and identity of dead, injured and hospitalized casualties; handling mass casualties, victim identification and emergency mortuary services.
- j. Providing personnel and technical assistance for damage estimates concerning public water supply systems, public owned waste disposal systems and public health facilities.
- k. Evaluating radiological, chemical and biological exposure hazards associated with contaminated air, food, water and drugs and advising the public on protective measures to be taken to lessen the effects of these hazards, in cooperation with the DEP.
- l. Arranging for appropriate medical care for persons exposed to radiological, chemical and biological agents.
- m. Arranging for additional health manpower or supplies when required in the affected communities.
- n. Requesting through WVOES, U.S. Public Health Service, and other federal agencies, if needed, to supply any needed public health manpower or supplies when requirements exceed the state's resources.
- o. Providing professional counseling to victims to relieve mental health problems caused or aggravated by a disaster.
- p. Providing professional counseling services to respondents and/or disaster workers to relieve mental health problems caused or aggravated by a disaster.
- q. Arranging through WVOES additional emergency medical transportation as required.
- r. Assisting in the prevention and alleviation of water pollution problems.
- s. The State Fire Marshal working with the Office of Emergency Services following a Major Disaster Declaration will determine the habitability of affected dwellings.
- t. The State Fire Marshal will determine that the condemnation of public or private structures is appropriate for health hazard reasons within the disaster area.

- u. Coordinating with the American Red Cross in assisting local medical resources with first aid; supplemental medical, nursing and hospital care; individual medical assistance, such as prescription drugs, eyeglasses, dentures and prosthetic devices; blood and blood products; and mass shelter management.
  - v. Coordinating with other state agencies such as, but not limited to, the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Health and Human Resources, that have health and medical related programs to provide these services as needed in an emergency or disaster.
  - w. Coordinating through WVOES with other departments having communications capabilities to ensure that the Emergency Medical Communications Network will be put to the best possible use in a disaster or emergency to meet health and communications requirements.
  - x. Coordinating through WVOES with the Department of Agriculture the inspection of establishments under their authority to ensure that food is safe for human consumption.
2. The following agencies provide support as indicated to the Department of Health and Human Resources:
- a. West Virginia State Police gathers information concerning the injured and dead; supports the State Medical Examiner in carrying out his duties; escorts or relays emergency medical needs to or from the disaster site when required; provides law and order for medical facilities; communications assistance.
  - b. National Guard provides manpower for actions to protect public health; transportation assistance, air and ground; and water supply.
  - c. Civil Air Patrol provides transportation for medical and health items, health personnel, and disaster victims, if required.
  - d. Department of Agriculture provides inspections to ensure that food is safe for human consumption.
  - e. American Red Cross provides transportation, shelter, first aid and nursing assistance; blood and blood products; and casualty listings.
  - f. West Virginia Rural Water Association has a portable water plant that can be made available.
  - g. Office of Emergency Services provides overall direction and control to emergency/disaster operations and relays health and medical information to Department of Health and Human Resources staff.

- h. Rehabilitation Services provides rehabilitation and related services for disabled survivors; medical facilities and personnel, if required.
  - i. Natural Resources provides laboratory services.
  - j. Board of Pharmacy assists in accessing pharmacies to use as distribution points for the dispensing of medications and to ensure the security and safety of all controlled substances.
  - k. Salvation Army or the American Red Cross establishes temporary shelter and feeding stations.
3. The following guidelines summarize actions related to delivery of Emergency Health Services.
- a. The Director of the Office of Emergency Services, who is responsible to the Governor for carrying out the program of emergency services for the state, maintains liaison with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and requests that the department's Emergency Operations Plan be implemented when necessary.
  - b. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources maintains a current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) revises and updates the Department's Emergency Operations Plan and is responsible for coordinating the Health and Human Resources Department's activities during emergencies or disasters.
  - c. When a period of warning time is available, the Office of Emergency Services alerts the State Department of Health and Human Resources, through the OEMS, for preparedness actions to be taken should a disaster develop.
  - d. Upon receiving alerting information from the Office of Emergency Services, the OEMS of the Department of Health and Human Resources alerts the WV DHHR Disaster Network, indicating that a potential emergency or disaster may develop. Staff members are placed on a 24-hour alert status until the emergency passes.
  - e. The Director of OEMS will establish coverage of DHHR responsibilities in the EOC as directed by the Director of the Office of Emergency Services.
  - f. The OEMS identifies those staff members who will assume first shift responsibilities in the event a disaster or emergency occurs and maintains continuous liaison with the Office of Emergency Services and the Commissioner of the Bureau for Public Health.
  - g. Upon receipt of notification by the Office of Emergency Services that a disaster situation exists or is imminent, the Director of OEMS or his/her designee notifies the

Commissioner of the Bureau for Public Health that the Emergency Operations Plan is being activated and reports to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), State Capitol Building, or other designated locations, as directed by the EOC or Governor's Office to represent the DHHR during the emergency. Close liaison will be maintained by the Director of OEMS and his/her designee with the Office of Emergency Services and the WV DHHR Disaster Network.

- h. During and following an emergency/disaster the WV DHHR's OEMS coordinates assignment of the Department's personnel for damage survey, health inspections and immediate recovery operations.
- i. The Office of Emergency Medical Services of the WV DHHR maintains essential records detailing all health related activities concerning services provided, equipment used, personnel involvement (including hours worked, injuries sustained, etc.) prior to, during and following the emergency.
- j. The Office of Emergency Medical Services maintains a daily log of disaster events related to WV DHHR activities, commitment and expenditures. At the conclusion of the disaster or emergency, a comprehensive report is presented to the State Health Commissioner for his/her evaluation and information, and to other officials, as required.

#### C. TASK ASSIGNMENTS

##### 1. State

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources provides or coordinates provision of all emergency health services. Other State and volunteer agencies, as indicated in the annex, support the WV DHHR in providing emergency health services and medical assistance.

##### 2. Federal

Federal agencies including, but not limited to, the U.S. Public Health Service, provide emergency health assistance as required. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources will request such assistance through the WV OES Director.

#### D. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

1. West Virginia Code, Chapter 15, Article 5, “Emergency Services”
2. Department of Health and Human Resources Emergency Operations Plan
3. West Virginia Code, Chapter 9, Article 1, “Human Services, Legislative Purpose and Definitions”
4. West Virginia Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan